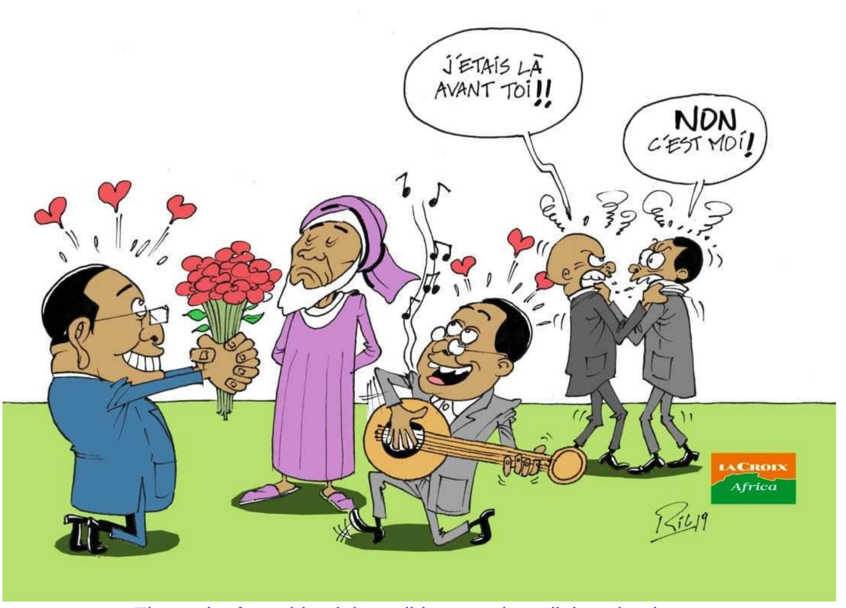
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Senegal: Presidential elections 2019
The shining example of democratic transition immersed in muddy power-politics

Dirk Kohnert & Laurence Marfaing [1]



The rush of presidential candidates to the religious leaders
Source: Landry Banga (nom de plume, RIC).
Dakar: *La Croix Africa*, 19 February 2019

Abstract: Whereas Senegal has long been a showcase of democracy, including peaceful political alternance, things apparently changed fundamentally with the Senegalese presidentials of 2019 that brought new configurations. One of the major issues was political transhumance that has been elevated to the rank of religion in defiance of morality. It threatened political stability and peace. In response, social networks of predominantly young activists, created in 2011 in the aftermath of the Arab Spring focused on grass-roots advocacy with the electorate on good governance and democracy. They proposed a break with a political system that they consider as neo-colonialist. Moreover, Senegal's justice is frequently accused to be biased, and the servility of the Constitutional Council which is in the first place an electoral court has often been denounced.

Key Words: Senegal, presidential elections, governance, political change, political transhumance, social networks, West Africa, WAEMU, ECOWAS, civic agency

JEL-Code: N17, N37, N97, O17, O35, P16, Z13

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1. The presidentials of 2019, a new political configuration demands its toll

With two democratic transitions of political power and no coup since its independence in 1960, Senegal has been considered one of the most stable countries in Africa up to date[2]Yet, the formerly shining example of democratic transition is actually immersed in corruption and muddy power politics (Dumont, 2019). Once a haven of peace, stability and democracy in Western Africa, that had never experienced any coup d'état, other than most of its West African ECOWAS neighbours, Senegal is now apparently endangered by severe political tensions. This the more so, because the incumbent, President Macky Sall, and his coalition *Benno Bokk Yakkar* (BBY, 'united for the same hope', in the local language Wolof) won a second five-year term already in the first round of the contested presidential election of 24 February 2019. According to the provisional results, announced by the National Commission for the Recording of Votes (CNRV) on 28 February, he secured a crushing victory with 58% of votes, against 21% for his closest rival, former Prime Minister Idrissa Seck with his party Rewmi ('the country', in Wolof). The other contenders got even less: Ousmane Sonko with his party Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity (PASTEF) (16%), El-Hadj Issa Sall and his party Party of Unity and Assembly (PUR) (4%), and Madické Niang, the PDS dissident candidate and his coalition *Jamm Ak Xeweul* ('peace in abundance', in Wolof)-Madicke2019 that wanted to rally the voters of the PDS that were disappointed by the self-interested attitude of former PDS leader Abulaye Wade got just 1%.

Graph 1: Results of Senegal's presidentials 2019

MACKY SALL
Votes: 58.27%
BBY

IDRISSA SECK
Votes: 20.50 %
Idy 2019

OUSMANE SONKO
Votes: 15.67%
Pastef-Les Patriotes

EL HADJI ISSA SALL
Votes: 4.07%
PUR

MADICKÉ NIANG
Votes: 1.48%
Madické2019

Source: La Commission nationale de recensement des votes
Résultats datés du 28 Février 2019
BBC

Source: "Macky Sall déclaré vainqueur de la présidentielle au Sénégal"
London: BBC-Afrique, 28 February 2019

Despite the call for a boycott of the elections (see below for details) by former president Abdoulaye Wade, the elevated turn-out of 66%, compared with 52% for the presidentials of

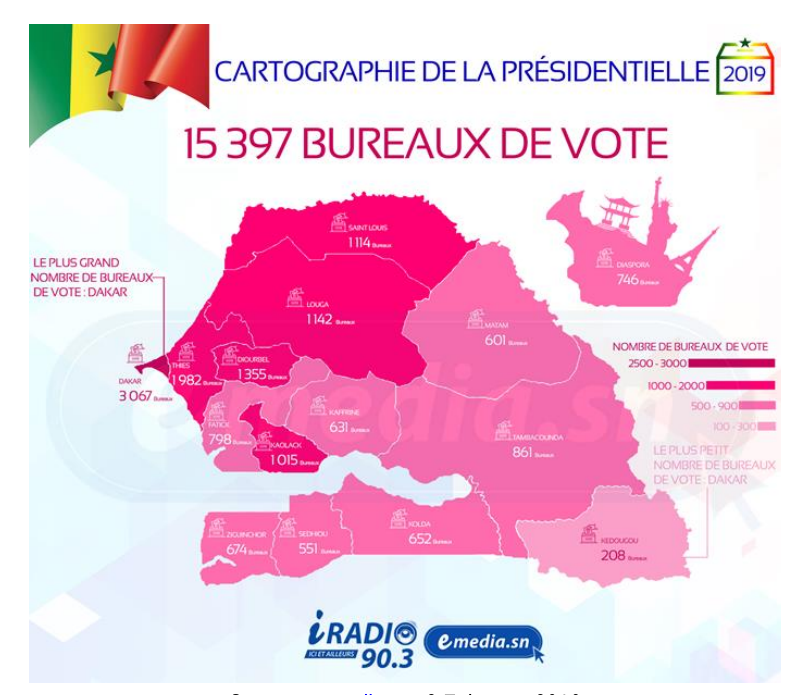
[2] Since December1980, when the founding father of independent Senegal, Leopold Sedar Senghor, who had ruled the country for twenty years (1960 to 1980), resigned from his presidency prematurely before the end of his fifth term, seven pluralist elections have been taken place. In five of these polls, the incumbent president was re-elected in the first round. At two occasions the incumbent had to bow to the second round which he lost.

2012 or 57% at the legislative elections of 2017, showed a relatively strong interest in these elections. However, because Macky Sall was accused of preventing some of his main rivals from running, the opposition got upset and even refused to contest the results before the Constitutional Council, which it apparently considered as biased in favour of the acting president (Diedhiou, 2019), as will been shown below in more detail. Idrissa Seck, the most important contender of Macky Sall, condemned the election and its results as a 'result on the order of the outgoing candidate' (Mbaye, 2019).

The strive between the acting government and the opposition focused on two controversial issues. Firstly, a new electoral law, which had been approved by the Senegal Parliament in April 2018, stipulating that candidates had to require 53,000 signatures for qualifying for the presidency. Seven of the 27 candidates succeeded to get nationwide support in this "*parrainage*" process.

- Macky Sall, the incumbent (57 years old) for the party Alliance for the Republic, seeking to extend his presidency for a second term,
- Idrissa Seck (58 years old, party Rewmi), the former prime minister
- El-Hadj Issa Sall (62 years old, Party of Unity and Assembly),
- Ousmane Sonko, (Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity, PASTEF),
- Madické Niang (65 years old, Independent),
- Karim Wade (50 years old, Senegalese Democratic Party, PDS) and
- Khalifa Sall (63 years old, Socialist Party, PS), former mayor of Dakar and delegate of the National Assembly.

Graph 2: Number and geographical distribution of polling stations



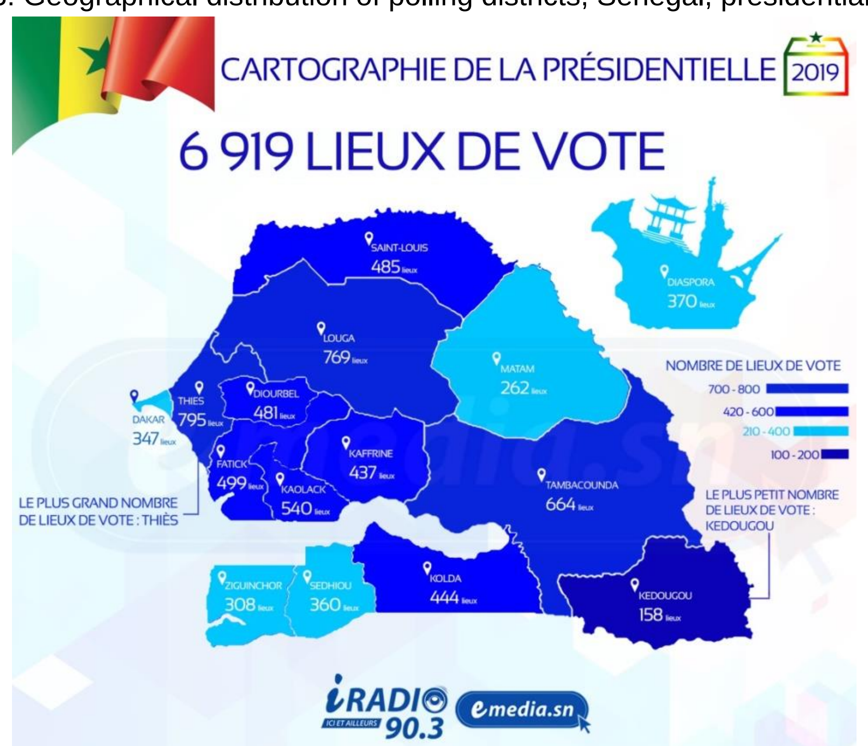
Source: e-media.sn, 2 February 2019

But even more essentially, the presidential candidates of the two most important political parties in the country's political history, Karim Wade of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) and Khalifa Sall of the Socialist Party (PS), were denied to candidate because of criminal charges against them. The Senegalese Constitutional Council decided on 20

January 2019, not to admit these two candidates, because they had been sentenced to prison terms of more than five years for corruption and "embezzlement of public funds" which disqualified them from candidature according to law. Thus, both Karim Wade, the son of the former President Abdoulaye Wade (PDS, 92 years old), and the popular former mayor of Dakar, Khalifa Sall were out of the game. Wade was unexpectedly pardoned by President Macky Sall in 2016 and fled into political exile in Qatar. Khalifa Sall had been relieved of office already as Dakar's mayor and Member of the National Assembly in 2017 (Volk, 2019). Many voters suspect these charges to be fabricated in order to keep Karim Wade and Khalifa Sall out of the game (Foot, 2019).

Thus, the 11th Senegal presidential elections of 24 February 2019, when a total of 6,683,043 registered voters out of Senegal's 15 million inhabitants were called to cast their vote in 15,397 polling stations, in 6.919 polling districts, including 370 abroad, were characterized by a new political configuration. For the first time since independence, none of the major traditional parties threw its hat in the ring. Only four presidential contenders of the incumbent Macky Sall had been admitted for the polls. This, against fourteen challengers in 2012 and fifteen in 2007 and the background of a multitude of 65 political parties currently existing in Senegal (here and in the following, Ba, 2019). The Socialist Party (PS), that had been present at all polls since the independence of Senegal (1960), was outmanoeuvred by internal conflicts, most recently, the aforementioned case of the former mayor of Dakar, Khalifa Sall. The second big traditional party, the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) of Abdoulaye Wade and the Alliance of Forces for Progress (AFP) of Moustapha Niasse as well as the Front for Socialism and Democracy / Benno Jubël (FSD-BJ) of the Dièye family who all had run the polls since 2000 had to depart as well (Ba, 2019). Most of the PS and the AFP did not participate because they wanted to rally the presidential movement and empower the candidate Macky Sall.

Graph 3: Geographical distribution of polling districts, Senegal, presidentials, 2019



Source: e-media.sn, 2 February 2019

For the PDS and its leader, the former 92-year-old President Abdoulaye Wade, it was different. He wanted to make his son, Karim, the next head of state. When Karim's candidature was rejected by the Constitutional Council, Wade called for a boycott of the elections. He even did not accept the candidature of Nadicke Niang as runner on the ticket of the PDS. This unparalleled situation that suddenly erased the old political elite from the political landscape. This was, according to some factions involved, the quittance for years of bad governance and corruption, for others, however, it was the shabby foul-play of the actual power elite led by Macky Sall (Ba, 2019).

The surprising rallying of the PDS later-on to the liberal camp under the Macky Sall regime seems to confirm the death of political ideology that had been predicted by political experts since the slowly crumbling political system since the 1980s. The latest political migrations within this power elite are a sign of unscrupulous and opportunistic political transhumance, for which Senegal became already famous internationally (Ba, 2019; NIang, 2013).

2. When transhumance becomes religion

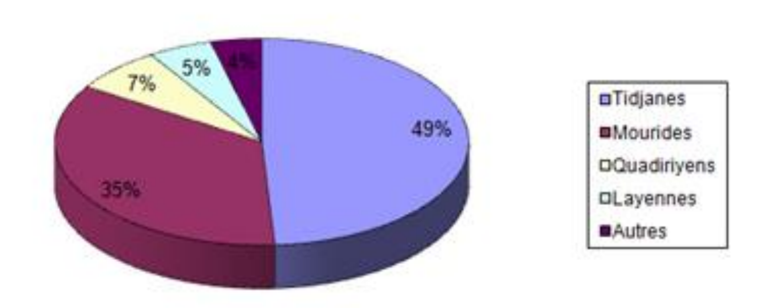
Political transhumance, i.e. political nomadism from one party affiliation to another, depending on the attractiveness of 'pastures', has become so widespread in Senegal's political history[3] that it has been recognized already internationally, and even earned an entry in the French dictionary '*Le Petit Larousse illustré*' (NIang, 2013). Although it is still chastised as betrayal and morally repugnant if it concerns the political adversary, in reality, political transhumance has become more and more commonplace. It does not bother anyone, last, but not least, because party programs are still considered as paper-waste by many voters, and political ideology, whether socialist, liberal or conservative, is said to be increasingly irrelevant. What counts most, besides the individual political history, experience and charisma of the respective candidate, are religious, regional and ethnic affiliation and assets promised to the particular clientele. According to Moustapha Tamba, professor of sociology at the University of Dakar, there are three main causes of political transhumance: the lack of internal party democracy, unfulfilled promises and marabout orders (Tamba, 2011). In fact, the Muslim brotherhoods, notably the Mourids and Tidjanes, have been considered the grey eminences behind the presidential candidates since independence (Beck, 2002; Monjib, 1998). Therefore, candidates run for 'advice' and support of their religious mentors (Banga, 2019).

Consequently, political transhumance in Senegal has been elevated to the rank of religion in defiance of morality (Drame, 2012). Remarkably, this 'transhumance as religion' works apparently in both directions. Firstly, it refers to the active practice, even celebration of the 'religion of transhumance', and secondly, it makes allusions to the political transhumance of religious traditional leaders. The latter, i. e. politico-religious transhumance, may be most dangerous for political stability and peace, notably, if rival religious leaders are involved, as happened already in the past (see below).

[3] The first case of parliamentary transhumance dates back to colonial times, when MP Ibrahima Seydou Ndao, elected on the list of the Senegalese Progressive Union (UPS) in 1952, resigned from his party before the elections of March 1959, and joined the Party for Senegalese Solidarity (PPS) of Cheikh Tidiane Sy, thus becoming the first transhumant deputy in the political history of Senegal (Tamba, 2011, Fn.13).

Since colonial times, the Islam of the Senegalese brotherhoods has always been very closely connected to politics. Therefore, any assumed difference between a 'moderate' African Soufi-Islam and 'radical' political Arab Sunni Islam in this respect would be misleading (here and in the following, Samson-Ndaw, 2009: 149-150). Moreover, new leaders within the Senegalese marabout-system, notably the Marabout, late Cheikh Ahmed Tidiane Sy, and the Mouride Modou Kara M'backé, had been actively engaged in the creation of religious-political spaces, coining a new type of 'religious citizenship'. Thus, Cheikh Tidiane Sy was the first Senegalese from a large religious family to have created a political party. He had a difficult stance with his Marabou peers with the exception of a few, like Sheikh Ibrahim Niass who supported him (Ben, 2013). Cheikh Modou Kara M'Backé, founded a political party as well, the Truth for Development Party. Another religious leader within the *muridiyya* that had founded a political party was Cheikh Ibra Fall who created the Citizens' Movement for a Development Democracy (MDC). However, Cheikh Modou Kara M'backé was said to be the first to have created furthermore an important militia at the disposal of the brotherhood and his party (Dzon, 2010: 27).

Graph 4: Distribution of Senegal's Muslim population by brotherhood



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Source: S'installer au Sénégal, Repartition des confrèries musulmanes, 31 August 2013; Dumont et al, 2019: 36

The segmentation and aggregation of the Senegalese Muslim population, which accounts for 90% of the population, around four brotherhoods and another four autonomous homes, under the aegis of certain families is unique in Western Africa. Some brotherhoods are of Arab origin (Qadiriyya and Tidjaniya), others, like Layenes and Mouridism, are locally created. The brotherhoods each have their holy cities, their dignitaries and disciples. According to (Dumont et al, 2019: 36) Muridism is the second brotherhood numerically, after the Tidjanes, but probably the most dynamic economically, culturally and politically. There are four brotherhoods and four autonomous homes of 'divine' Muslim families *(Wane, 2010:2)*:

a. The brotherhoods:
   i. Qadr: Kounta, in Ndiassane
   ii. Tijân: Sy, in Tivaouane
   iii. Layène: Thiaw in Cap-Vert
   iv. Mouride: Mbacké, in Baol at Touba and environments
   v.
b. The autonomous homes of 'holy' families in the following regions:
   i. Centre: Kaolack with the family Niasse
   ii. South East: Madina Gounasse with the Bâ
   iii. Centre: Thiénaba with the Seck
   iv. North: Louga with the Sall

Map 1: Centres of Senegalese Islam

Source: Gueye, Cheik - Recherche Institute for the development, Cartographic Service, Paris: IRD Dumont et al, 2019: 36

The town of Touba, the home of the Mourides, about 200 km to the east of Dakar, is arguably the most important holy site to visit for any presidential candidate. The city in the Baol region, with about 600,000 people, is the second biggest town beside the capital Dakar. It is considered to be a stronghold of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) of former President Abdoulaye Wade, who, contrary to his predecessor, openly affirmed his membership in the brotherhood of the Mourides (Dumont et al 2019: 38). In fact, he publicly declared that he was elected thanks to the support of the Mouridiya in 2000 and 2007 (Guennoun, 2019.16). His son's candidature for the presidency had been rejected by the Constitutional Council, which was probably the main reason behind his call for a boycott of the polls. Therefore, Madické Niang, the PDS dissident candidate, had chosen to come to Touba to try to seduce Abdoulaye Wade's Mouride electorate and its followers (Lesseux, 2019). Nevertheless, the incumbent Macky Sall, who had tried to attract the sympathy of the Mourides by generous infrastructure projects during his past tenure, started his electoral campaign here as well and was received by the General Khalif of the Mourides-brotherhood, Serigne Mountakha Mbacké, the eighth Khalif of Mouridism[4], on Sunday, 3 February 2019 (Lesseux, 2019).

Already before, on 14 November 2018, the outgoing president had paid a call of courtesy to Serigne Babacar Sy Mansour, the Kalif of the Tidianes in Tivaouane. On this occasion Macky Sall reiterate his commitment to the modernization of religious cities, what he would be able

[4] The magazine *Jeune Afrique* ranked Serigne Mountakha Mbacké, the new Caliph of the Mourides since January 2018, as one of the 50 most influential figures on the African continent . Jeune Afrique, 7 May 2018, www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/553618/societe/les-50-africains-les-plus-influents-28-serigne-mountakha-mbacke/ (Guennoun, 2019: 17).

to do only if he would be re-elected, i. e. if he would get the support of the first Confraternity of the country (Guennoun, 2019:18). Moreover, both candidates, Macky Sall and Ousmane Sonko, were present at the annual holy celebrations of the two most important brotherhoods. Apparently, Ousmane Sonko was favoured in Touba while President Macky Sall was favoured in Tivaouane. Indeed, during his visit to Touba, Ousmane Sonko made promises concerning actions in favour of the city as well (Guennoun, 2019: 20). The other presidential candidates called for support in their respective strongholds too. Idrissa Seck for example, called for support in his fief of Thies, Ousmane Sonko and Issa Sall had chosen the capital Dakar for the launch of their electoral campaign across the country (Tambedou & Fall, 2019).

This time, the Great Khalif of the Mourides did not emit a "*Ndigueul*", i.e. a formal call to vote for one of the candidates, although this happened already in the past. Apart from President Abdoulaye Wade, the head of the Mouride-brotherhood had also called to vote for Abdou Diouf in the past (Guennoun, 2019:17; Dumont et al 2019: 37). But even if the religious leaders decided to remain silent in public, that does not necessarily mean that their followers did not get informal signs for whom to vote. These may be as binding as a formal recommendation, considering that for many believers their religious guides are more important than politicians (Guennoun, 2019:16). In short, what the marabout says, that is done, at least for a true believer (Tambedou & Fall, 2019).

In Senegal's history, the leaders of religio-political parties did not separate any more religious and socio-political life. Their political battlefield included the creation of radical conservative 'Muslim patriots' and the Islamization of the state 'from below'. The latter included a sharp critic of the unreligious and noxious life, degenerated by the impact of Western globalization, notably in contemporary urban environments. Based on their highly mediatized lobbying, their followers in Senegal were estimated to count already more than 500,000 people in 2009 (Samson-Ndaw, 2009: 149-150).

Of special interest in this respect was the strategy of *Ahmadiyya* Muslim Community, an Islamic revival or messianic movement, acting worldwide, including Senegal, that had been analysed in 2012 by Fabienne Samson (Holder, 2012). It strove to impose itself on the national Muslim community, despite its excommunication on the part of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and sought to accommodate with the state and, more broadly, with the French-speaking political middle and upper-class (Holder, 2012). With its social and humanitarian action (boreholes, wells, reforestation, schools, hospitals), its commitment to the public space in tolerating Western modernity (e.g. in terms of gender relations), its resolute use of the media, or its self-financing capacity (16% of the revenues of the faithful are paid to the movement), it compared favourably, against the increasing influence of Evangelical churches that confronted them, which asked only for an obol of 10% (Holder, 2012). Nevertheless, it is open to question whether even the *Ahmadiyya*, that relies on a globalized organization, with headquarters of the Caliphate in London, would really accept a secular state as an arbiter between religions and confessions.

In view of the ever increasing use of modern media, like mobile phone and internet, the number of followers of the Islamic movements of late Marabout Sy, Mouride Mbacké and other religious leaders may have doubled in the meantime. Thus, the media became decisive also for the electoral campaign of the presidentials in 2019. Therefore, all admitted five candidates for the presidential of 2019 invested heavily in the digital field, notably in

WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and other internet platforms, used by nearly 10 million, mostly young people, out of a population estimated at 16 million (Ciyow, 2019). This holds especially for the young and charismatic Ousmane Sonko, who, unburdened by the colonial heritage, even launched an online crowdfunding campaign that started already in 2017, called "Gift of myself for the Fatherland" to pay for his campaign. The operation tried to mobilize all possible fundraising platforms, including those of existing online banks in Senegal. But it applied also for the presidential candidate Idirissa Sall, leader of the Party of Unity and Assembling (PUR) who is a follower of the Tidianes.

Hence, social online networks in Senegal were already hailed as ‘guardians of democracy’. Yet, the use of social media for the campaign increasingly runs the risk of being capitalized by adversaries too, including manipulation with fake news (Ciyow, 2019). Sonko, for example, had wanted to free himself from the powerful Sufi brotherhoods but then thought otherwise. Apparently, this unexpected political transhumance was not appreciated very much in a country that has always voted in the brotherhood triangle (Maillard, 2019). Moreover, he is one of the farouche opponents of the continuing dependence of Senegal on the Franc CFA and promised to leave the CFA-zone in case he should be elected. Apparently, this was not to the taste of the established political elite of Françafrique either, which might be one of the reasons why he was defeated by Macky Sall in the elections (VIP, 2019; Kohnert, 2019; see also the ‘Conclusion’ for a more detailed analysis of the issues at stake).

3. *Y en a marre*, civic agency facing neocolonialism

‘*Y en a marre’*, (Enough is Enough, in French) has been created by a group of rappers and journalists in 2011 in the aftermath of the Arab Spring to denounce the societal and political problems in Senegal (Latuner, 2018). The movement which has remained active since the 2012 presidential election, focusses on undertaking advocacy, monitoring and education on land reforms, constitutional reforms and electoral processes. It has been carried mainly by young activists, who took advantage of Wade's inauguration ceremony on 19 March 2011 to protest against President Wade's political excesses. They gained popularity during the June 23, 2011 protests against Abdoulaye Wade's plan to allow his son Karim Wade to succeed him. In the following year, the movement was captured by several political parties, including the Alliance of Forces of Progress (AFP) of Moustapha Niasse. In the meantime, the movement has been emulated by Senegal’s civil society. It organized itself in many associations to defend their political demands, to control the good conduct of the last elections, to alert and stimulate the population to take their destiny in its own hands, to inform them about attempts of voter-manipulation, e.g. by buying votes by the distribution of money. In general; they focused on grass-roots advocacy with the electorate on good governance and democracy. The young activists allied with executives and intellectuals in proposing a break with a political system that in their view "has raged since independence" and that they consider as “neocolonialist" (interview IS, 22 January 2019; see also Latuner, 2018:88-109). ‘*Y en a marre’* calls for transparency in campaign budgets and applauds for example Sonko's initiative to create citizen funds by means of social media (see above). The youth activist also believe that despite a general favourable image of democracy in Senegal, in reality it has been more and more abused. Irrespective of controversial debates around the corruption-trials of Karim Wade and Khalifa Sall that will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the civil society, reinforced by NGOs, citizen movements and the political opposition,

denounced the frequent ban of demonstrations and the brutalizing of citizens in duly registered events. Thus, for example, they identify with the publication of Sonko (Solutions 2018). That is, they long for a fresh socio-political antisystem that breaks with the caciques of Senegalese politics. A new system that proposes solutions to mismanagement and embezzlement, to the stranglehold on the economy by foreign powers, to poor governance and moral corruption not just of men but also of institutions in the country. It is all the more credible for this group of people that Sonko was ousted from his post at the Inspectorate General of Taxes and Domains in 2018 by presidential decree because he published a book on "Oil and Gas in Senegal: Chronicle of Spoliation". The book, which had been indexed by the government, sharply criticized the controversial management of oil and gas by the Senegalese authorities and certain business circles of the corrupt network of *Françafrique* (Kohnert, 2019). Finally, the young people condemned the stranglehold of the economy of the country by foreigners, in particular of France, including Senegal's submission to the 'outdated' CFA Franc agreement.

At the societal level
These young activists denounce the omnipresence of a political class that has reproduced itself in the same manner since independence. A system, which despite the obvious modernization of Senegal and considerable but not inclusive economic growth, keep the people of Senegal in a precarious situation where the health system and education are antiquated. Certainly, Macky Sall is acknowledged to have extended the possibilities of health insurance, the modernisation of some health centers - in particular by setting up dialysis facilities, or to have set up social assistance for the elderly poor families. But young people consider these changes minimal compared to the grand visions of the government's long-term strategy, known as Blueprint 'Sénégal Émergent' (PSE). The government has certainly increased the number of universities in Senegal. However, it did not ensure at the same time to raise the quality teachers and it ignored to improve the existing universities of Dakar and Saint-Louis. Last, but not least, *Y en a marre* deplore the elevated youth unemployment rate of officially overall 14% (2015), worsening the perspectives for young graduates who are likely to join the ranks of the informal sector, considering an occupancy-rate of only 34% of the population (males 27%, females 21%; Indicators of the labour market, Senegal Data portal, 2019). Moreover, these rates are distributed very disparately by region and gender. According to Professor Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, former Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Management (Faseg), Univ. of Dakar, estimates that the overall un- and underemployment rate would be around 50%.

The phenomenon Sonko
Formerly being inspector of taxes and estates, Ousmane Sonko only recently became a politician. A native of Thies, born in 1974, and student at the Gaston Berger University of Saint Louis, then Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar, he finally made his doctorate in Lyon in public and economic law. Thus, he represents the typical path of young and ambitious Senegalese academics. With his supporters he is considered to be honest, which, however, is strongly contested by his opponents. The fact that he grew up in politically and geographically marginalized Casamance region, from where he got the mandate as a candidate for the presidential election, singles him out of the stakes of his country, accustomed to a political class from the "*4 communes*", i.e. of the privileged Frankophone intelligentsia originating from the communes of St-Louis, Rufisque, Gorée and Dakar were granted French citizenship as early as 1916 to thank Senegal for its horrendous war efforts.

The CFA franc in question
For a long time, voices in French-speaking African countries have risen for an exit from the CFA franc (see below). Today the discussion has become international and the UMOA and ECOWAS countries are officially organizing to discuss the modalities of an exit from the CFA Franc and the elaboration of a common currency for the countries of the West African sub-region. *Y en a marre* rallies behind this movement.

In conclusion
For the last ten years now, young people have become more and more politicized by taking an interest in the progress of their country and a globalized world. They protest by observing that some of the most miserable colonial countries in the 1950s have become emerging powers, while Senegal remains a poor country (IS interview of 23 February.2019). Contrary to what they have been observing for decades, they want to take their destiny into their own hands. They are open to discuss all controversial issues with France, as Sonko told me, but only if France accepts a dialogue between equals and listens to the arguments of the counterpart. Social networks are at work, in Senegal first, though one should not forget the considerable cleavages between city and province, but also trans-border networking in a globalized world. Globalized, they integrate with the movement of an Afro-centric attitude already thematised by 'Afropolitanism' (Awondo 2014; Mbembe; Abebe) or 'Afrotopia' (Felwine Sarr), i.e. certainly globalization, but resolutely African. Thus, it is not without reason, that the government has been very sceptical vis à vis this movement. In fact it tried to restrict its activities by investigating in alleged international funding of the network by INGOs. The investigation into *Y'en a marre* started only a few months before the elections, although the association has existed for years, which, according to amnesty international (ai), clearly indicates that the aim is to intimidate civil society groups ahead of the elections (AI, 2019).

3. Justice and courts as 'stooges' of the president to eliminate competitors?

A central point in the controversial discussion of the 2019 presidentials was the barring of two major oppositional contenders, Karim Wade und Khalifa Sall, from the list of eligible candidates by the Constitutional Council because of criminal charges of corruption against them. Khalifa Sall had been alleged for misappropriation of public funds during his tenure as mayor of Dakar in 2017 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment and payment of five million FCFA (approximately EUR 7,630) on 3 January 2019. Already in March 2018 he was relieved of his position as mayor of Dakar and lost his mandate in parliament. Supporters of Khalifa Sall and his party (Parti Socialiste, PS) suspected that a politicized judiciary tried to disavow a serious rival of the president through false accusations (Volk, 2019:2). Karim Wade was not admitted to the election either, because he was sentenced on 23 March 2015, to six years in prison for alleged corruption during his time as a minister in his father's cabinet. In 2010, Karim Wade had amassed so many ministerial portfolios that he managed a quarter of Senegal's national budget (Dumont,2019: 64). In 2012, his father was defeated by Macky Sall in the second round of the presidentials 2012. This was explained by observers, last, but not least, because of the ambitions of the incumbent Abdoulaye Wade to install his son Karim as heir to his throne. However, this was strongly rejected as quasi-

monarchic insolence by the opposition (Dumont, 2019:34). In 2016 Karim Wade was surprisingly pardoned by President Macky Sall and fled into exile in Qatar. Yet, because of this conviction, the Constitutional Court did not recognise him as a legitimate candidate (Volk, 2019: 2). Incidentally, Macky Sall himself had been accused of money laundering as well during his tenure as prime minister of Abdoulaye Wade in 2007, however, the case was closed without conviction (Dumont, 2019:32).

When opposition realized that they had been defeated by the incumbent already in the first round of the 2019 presidentials they did not even bother to contest the results before the highest Senegalese court. Obviously, it considered the Constitutional Council to be biased in favour of the acting president. And this not entirely without reason.

A look in Senegal’s political history shows that its legal system is not beyond criticism. Apparently, the rule of law has been perceived by both the ordinary voter and the power elite less as an intangible third force within a system of separation of powers than as the reflection of a balance between forces, the nature of which can be modified according to circumstances. According to Assane Thiam, the country’s democracy is a sham and the rule of law constantly undermined (Thiam, 2007:145). This was underlined by Penda Mbow (2008) who holds that Senegal declined to the point of mere electoral authoritarianism. The strategic interest of the ruling party in a strong and independent constitutional review body was apparently low (Stroh & Heyl, 2015:181).

Senegal's judiciary, which has been modelled along the French model, is divided and weakened. There coexist divers supreme courts, the Constitutional Council, which is in the first place an electoral court, a Council of State, a Court of Cassation, a Court of Accounts. All seven members of the Constitutional Council are appointed by the president of the republic, including two proposed by the president of the National Assembly, for six non-renewable years. They are partially renewed every two years with one or two new members.

Senegal’s justice is frequently accused to be biased, and the servility of the Constitutional Council often denounced (Thiam, 2007: 152; Heyl, 2017). Whereas it is difficult to identify blatant misjudgement or interference with the executive, many magistrates anticipate in their ruling the desires of the head of state out fear and submission (Thiam, 2007:152). Moreover, the consistency of rulings, i.e. that similar irregularities are answered with similar responses and sanctions which is crucial for the credibility of the judicial system (Heyl, 2017:48), has been apparently questioned by the opposition with respect to the conviction of the two oppositional candidates for corruption and embezzlement of funds and the subsequent annulation of their candidacy by the Constitutional Court.

4. Conclusion

Whereas Senegal has long been – and apparently still is – for the Western world a showcase of democracy[5], including peaceful political alternance as shown above, things have changed

[5] „South Africa, Botswana, Mauritius, and Senegal are some of the countries that can showcase a resistance to neo-patrimonialism through viable institutions, a history of political inclusivity, and smoother political transitions to democracy. … For example, there are also examples where violent contests or opposition's rejection of outcomes

fundamentally with the Senegalese presidentials of 2019. In fact, academics recently predicted already the retreat of African democracy (Cheeseman, & Smith, 2019). As for Senegal, the presidentials of 2019 brought new configurations which demanded its toll as well. One of the major issues was political transhumance that has been elevated to the rank of religion in defiance of morality (Drame, 2012). It threatened political stability and peace, at least two activists were killed and several others hurt during campaign rallies that started on 4 February 2019. Moreover, journalists were caught up in violence and pressures that were exerted on pro-democracy activists of *y en marre* (ai, 2019).

Another major issue was the growing awareness both at the grass-roots and of oppositional leaders, like the young and charismatic Ousmane Sonko, for a peaceful liberation from F-CFA domination of Senegal and to end 'French monetary imperialism in Africa` (Sylla, 2018; Kohnert, 2019; Kohnert, 2005). In fact, the debate had begun already in October 2016, when a group of African and European economists published a book entitled *Liberate Africa from Monetary Slavery: Who Profits from the CFA Franc?* (Nubukpo et al, 2016). In the wake of the public debate sparked by this and similar publications (see also: Pigeaud et al, 2018), people began to speak out (Sylla, 2018). They were assisted by internationally renowned (former) African officials and critics of the F CFA franc, including Togo's Kako Nubukpo (ex-BCEAO and former Togolese Minister), Senegal's Sanou Mbaye (ex-African Development Bank, and Guinea-Bissau's Carlos Lopez (ex-UN Economic Commission for Africa), as well as African bankers like Henri-Claude Oyima (President-Director General of BGFI Bank). Since some years, a social movement developed to demand the withdrawal of African states from the F CFA. On 7 January 2017, for example, an NGO set up and run by the activist Kemi Séba, backed by 'SOS Pan-Africa', anti-CFA demonstrations were organized in several African and European cities (Sylla, 2018). In Senegal, the *France Dégage* group has been campaigning for the "monetary sovereignty" of the CFA countries (Lottersberger, 2018). However, the Senegalese economist Ndongo Samba Sylla deplored that the debate over the CFA franc has been too often restricted to the general pros and cons because, in reality, these are extremely unevenly distributed between social strata. The F CFA benefits mainly a small political and economic elite, both in France and Francophone Africa, as well as the managers of central banks and French companies (Lottersberger, 2018). Increasing support by the general public in Francophone African countries for leaving the F CFA zone was shown recently by a survey of Afrobarometer, published on 7 February 2019, taking the example of Togo. The survey revealed that two-thirds of the Togolese population were in favour of leaving the F CFA because the currency would benefit France more than Togo and should be replaced (Akinocho, 2019). In the meantime, a task force for an exit by 2020 has been established, even though a majority of heads of state of WAEMU continue to give their support to the CFA franc (Akinocho, 2019).

coincided with power transitions: the 1999 elections in Nigeria, Ghana's 2000 election, and Senegal's election in 2001, thus favouring legitimacy and recurring transition over peaceful elections. " Rocha & Khuon (2018:153, 155)

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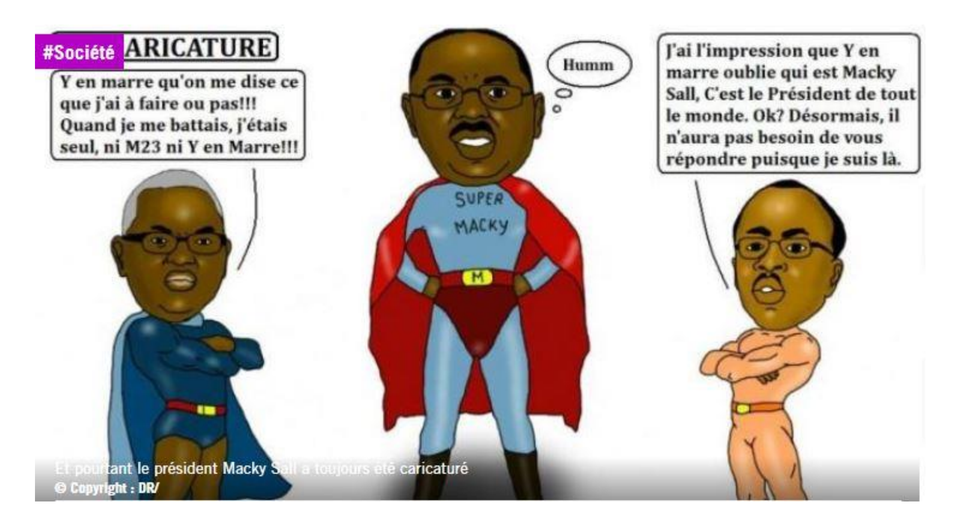
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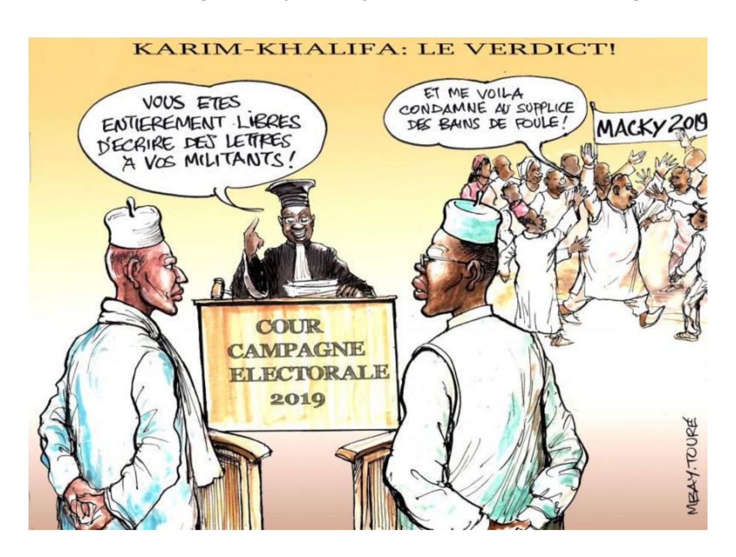
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Cartoons for illustration:



Source : DR-2019.*Sénégal-Macky Sall & y en marre*, Le 360 média digital marocain



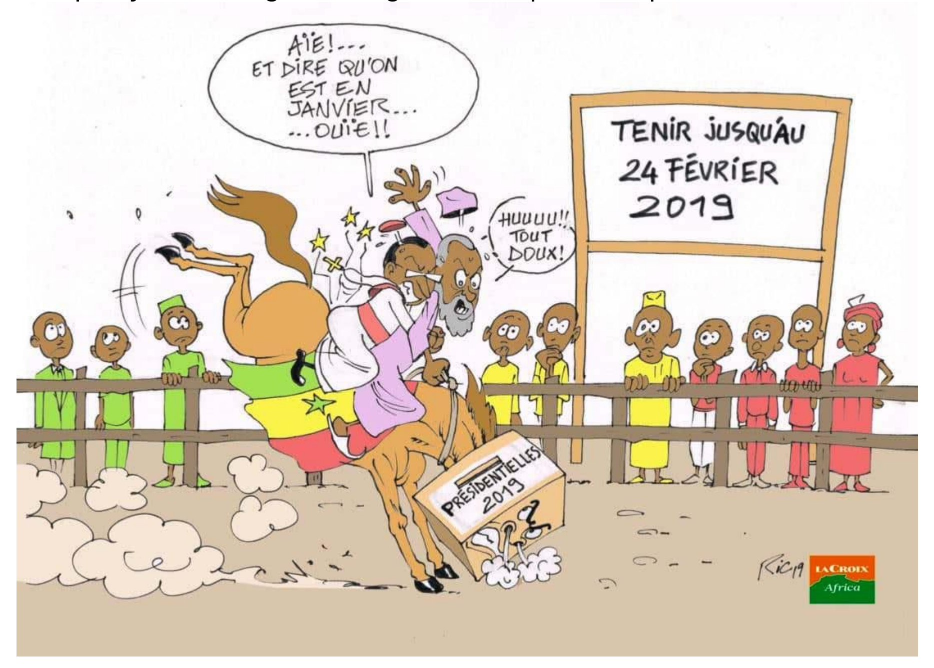
"À un an du premier tour de l'élection présidentielle, tous les candidats sont à la rencontre des militants – Sauf Karim Wade, en exil au Qatar, et Khalifa Sall détenu à Rebeuss".
Source: Mbay Touré, *Seneplus*, Walfadjri, 12 March 2018

Graph xy: Senegal's presidentials, 2019: The list of candidates



Source: Damien Glez, Senegal, presidentials, 2019.
Jeune Afrique, 6 Sept. 2018

Graph xy: The weight of religions for a peaceful presidential election



[Au Sénégal, les citoyens comptent sur le poids des religions pour une présidentielle apaisée]
Source: Landry Banga (RIC), Dakar: *La Croix Africa*, 22 Janary 2019

Graph xy: Senegalese politics, marabouts and homophobia



Source: Damien Glez, '*Hey, why is he wearing a robe*?'[6]
Jeune Afrique, 28 January 2016; cartooning for peace, 2017

[6] Cartoon modified by Glez after the protests of the mouride brotherhood to a man wearing a robe instead of a caftan in allusion to homophobia against the Senegalese singer Waly Seck, wearing a woman's handbag.

- **Cartoon affair of Damien Glez: politics, marabouts and homophobia "***On February 28th [2017, D.K.], the article "It's all fun and games until there's a handbag..." by Damien Glez was published on Jeune Afrique's website. The text was based on an incident regarding the Senegalese artist Wally Seck; a few weeks earlier, a photo of the singer carrying a handbag was largely relayed on social media and caused numerous comments. Glez's article evoked the obvious* ***homophobia*** *as well as the invocation, by the blacklisted artist, of his Muslim faith and* ***his fondness for Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, the founder of the Mouride brotherhood in Senegal.*** *The satirical drawing accompanying the text turned the tables on the Senegalese's inability to understand a Western fashion: we see a Westerner, conversely,* ***making fun of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba's caftan*** *(a traditional Senegalese dress), by exclaiming "*Hey, why is he wearing a dress [robe, D.K.]?*" [****Kleid****, statt Hose, Caftan as ‚*homo bag*', in allusion to the woman's handbag carried by the Senegalese singer Wally Seck, D.K.]The representation of the founder of the Mourides immediately caused an outcry in Senegal. Glez, as well as the newspaper Jeune Afrique, were quickly threatened online and protests were organized in several cities across the country " Called out by the population and media, the government reacted the day after the publication. "The government of Senegal expresses its indignation and firmly condemns this incomprehensible and inadmissible tactlessness on behalf of a newspaper organization in Africa that is meant to understand, defend and promote African culture and values," Seydou Guèye, the government's spokesman, declared. After having first toned down the cartoon – without the portrait of the religious leader – Jeune Afrique decided to finally withdraw it and published the following apology message: "With this drawing, our intention was not to hurt anyone, and even less to damage the figure venerated by Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba's numerous followers, but to criticize the stupidity of those who cannot see the difference between a caftan and a dress, with all the simplistic and unfounded deductions that could result from this. Nevertheless, we perfectly understand that this drawing could be shocking and we present our sincere apologies to those who were offended."Damien Glez did not apologize but gave his version of events in a Senegalese newspaper, which came to interview him in Ouagadougou. For him, this polemic highlights the danger of incorrect contextualization – even the manipulative detachment – of an article and its accompanying drawing." (REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF CARTOONISTS WORLDWIDE 2016/2017, p. 39)*
- *"Une* ***caricature du fondateur du mouridisme*** *par "Jeune Afrique" fait scandale. 30.01.2016 par Jacques Berset - La publication d'une caricature somme toute assez innocente du* ***Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba (1853-1927), fondateur de la confrérie des Mourides au Sénégal****, sur le site de l'hebdomadaire panafricain "Jeune Afrique" basé à Paris, a suscité une vive indignation dans le pays. Des menaces de mort à peine voilées contre le dessinateur Damien Glez circulent sur internet. Le dessinateur franco-burkinabé, membre de la Fondation "Cartooning for peace" http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/ avait illustré son article intitulé "****Affaire Waly Seck: jeu de sac à main, jeu de vilains…"*** *avec une caricature du fondateur de la confrérie des Mourides, Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, qui deviendra l'une des figures les plus importantes de l'islam de la région…. " Pour les fidèles de la confrérie des Mourides, le mal est déjà fait - En illustrant un article sur les dérapages liés, au Sénégal, à une affaire de port d'un sac de femme par un jeune artiste-chanteur, Waly Seck, le journal, influent en Afrique francophone, avait posté sur son site www.jeuneafrique.com un dessin représentant Ahmadou Bamba, en caftan, avec cette question: "Celui-là, pourquoi porte-t-il une robe ?" L'image a été retirée. Mais, pour les Mourides, entre 3 et 5 millions de fidèles, très puissants dans le pays où ils dominent dans le secteur informel, le mal est déjà fait. - Le 29 janvier, à Touba, fief de leur Khalife général, après la prière du vendredi, des milliers de Mourides sont descendus dans les rues pour exprimer leur colère contre l'hebdomadaire "Jeune Afrique" qu'ils accusent de les avoir offensés. "Dieu a réservé à ces personnes infectées par Satan une punition", a déclaré pour sa part Cheikh Bass Abdou Khadre, en délivrant un message du Khalife des Mourides, Serigne Sidy Makhtar Mbacké." (****Berset, 2016****)*